

# Benjamin Banneker

## Lesson Plan

### Overview:

Benjamin Banneker was a free Black man in early America who achieved fame and renown due to his remarkable, self-taught mathematical abilities, his astronomical knowledge, and his involvement in surveying the boundaries of what is now called Washington, D.C. This lesson offers students the chance to discover more about the impressive accomplishments of this undercelebrated American, despite the apparent limitations of his situation.

### Lesson Prompt:

Benjamin Banneker (born November 9, 1731; died October 19, 1806; Baltimore County, Maryland), was a mathematician, astronomer, compiler of almanacs, and writer. He was one of the first important African American intellectuals.

Share the prepared PowerPoint slide deck with the students.

Select activities from the accompanying Activity Pack according to your time allowance and student appropriateness. Included in the Activity Pack are:

- Multiple Choice Questions (Grades 2-8)

- Critical Thinking Exercises (Grades K-5 with guidance; Grades K-8 unassisted)

- Activities and Assignments (Grades 1-4 with guidance or as group project; Grades 5-8 unassisted)

- Matching Quiz (Grades K-5)

- Coloring Page (Grades K-3)

- Additional Reading/Viewing (Grades K-8 - varies by video)

### Vocabulary:

Students can look up and define the following vocabulary words:

Surveying  
Astronomy  
Celestial  
Navigation  
Ephemerides  
Census  
Orchard  
Eclipse  
Perimeter  
Almanac  
Abolitionist  
Definitive

### Recommended Resources:

<https://friendsofbenjaminbanneker.com/history/benjamin-banneker-2/>

# Standards and Learning Objectives

*Mapped to the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards published by the National Council for the Social Studies*

## Grades K-2

### English Language Arts:

D1.2.K-2. Identify disciplinary ideas associated with a compelling question.

D1.3.K-2. Identify facts and concepts associated with a supporting question.

D1.5.K-2. Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions.

### Civics:

D2.Civ.1.K-2. Describe roles and responsibilities of people in authority.

D2.Civ.2.K-2. Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.

D2.Civ.10.K-2. Compare their own point of view with others' perspectives.

D2.Civ.14.K-2. Describe how people have tried to improve their communities over time.

### Economics:

D2. Eco.2. K-2. Identify the benefits and costs of making various personal decisions.

D2. Eco.3. K-2. Describe the skills and knowledge required to produce certain goods and services.

D2.Eco.6.K-2. Explain how people earn income.

### Geography:

D2.Geo.1.K-2. Construct maps, graphs, and other representations of familiar places.

D2.Geo.4.K-2. Explain how weather, climate, and other environmental characteristics affect people's lives in a place or region.

D2.Geo.9.K-2. Describe the connections between the physical environment of a place and the economic activities found there.

### History:

D2. His.1. K-2. Create a chronological sequence of multiple events.

D2. His.2. K-2. Compare life in the past to life today.

D2. His.3. K-2. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.

D2.His.4.K-2. Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present.

### Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions:

D4.4.K-2. Ask and answer questions about arguments.

D4.5.K-2. Ask and answer questions about explanation.

## **Grades 3-5**

### **Civics:**

D2.Civ.6.3-5. Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families.

D2.Civ.8.3-5. Identify core civic virtues and democratic principles that guide government, society, and communities.

D2.Civ.10.3-5. Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues.

D2.Civ.12.3-5. Explain how rules and laws change society and how people change rules and laws.

D2.Civ.14.3-5. Illustrate historical and contemporary means of changing society.

### **Economics:**

D2. Eco.1.3-5. Compare the benefits and costs of individual choices.

D2. Eco.2.3-5. Identify positive and negative incentives that influence the decisions people make.

D2. Eco.3.3-5. Identify examples of the variety of resources (human capital, physical capital, and natural resources) that are used to produce goods and services.

### **Geography:**

D2.Geo.1.3-5. Construct maps and other graphic representations of both familiar and unfamiliar places.

### **History:**

D2. His.2.3-5. Compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.

D2. His.3.3-5. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities.

D2.His.4.3-5. Explain why individuals and groups during the same historical period differed in their perspectives.

### **Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions:**

D4.4.3-5. Critique arguments.

D4.5.3-5. Critique explanations.

D4.7.3-5. Explain different strategies and approaches students and others could take in working alone and together to address local, regional, and global problems, and predict possible results of their actions.

D4.8.3-5. Use a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions about and act on civic problems in their classrooms and schools.

## **Grades 6-8**

### **Civics:**

D2.Civ.6.6-8. Describe the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.

D2.Civ.10.6-8. Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society.

D2.Civ.14.6-8. Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

### **Economics:**

D2. Eco.1.6-8. Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

### **History:**

D2. His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.

D2. His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

D2. His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

D2. His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

### **Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions:**

D4.4.6-8. Critique arguments for credibility.

D4.5.6-8. Critique the structure of explanations.

D4.6.6-8. Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

D4.7.6-8. Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levers of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

D4.8.6-8. Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.